

# The Semaphore

A Publication of The Telegraph Hill Dwellers



**Step Into History**

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**COVER:** Watercolor by Albina Starkova, one of the architects for the Pioneer Park Project. See "Step Into History" on pages 16-17.

The Semaphore is a publication of the Telegraph Hill Dwellers for its members. Articles, except for the summary

of Board of Directors' Motions, do not necessarily reflect the official position of the Association or its Officers, but are the opinions of the writers of the individual signed articles. The Association can take no responsibility for their content. This membership publication is not to be reprinted or disseminated without written permission.  Printed on Recycled paper

## E D I T O R ' S      D E S K

San Franciscans fear their neighborhoods will be "malled" into Anywhere USA. Some feel like the movie chump who had to "take it and like it" when Humphrey Bogart slapped him around. But more people are challenging a regulatory climate that lets mega chain operations find ingenious ways to slide in, stanching only when communities muster the resources to defeat schemes often blessed by City agencies that know little, or don't care about, the impact of giant stores that drain the life out of neighborhoods.

Because North Beach is relentlessly targeted by chains trying to angle in by hook or by crook, new legislation proposed by Supervisor Mark Leno for a year's moratorium on certain operations will take pressure off local business owners and residents who need time to gain consensus about what the neighborhood wants and needs. Overdue (in fact, never done) is a report the Planning Commission is

required to file every two years on the status of commercial districts, including North Beach's. In the meantime, interim zoning controls will take angry demonstrators off the streets and stimulate constructive discourse.

Telegraph Hill Dwellers were initially excluded from meetings to plan the development of four lots at Broadway and Embarcadero--our back yard. (See "Mega Hotel Looms" in this issue.) Though THD members worked hard to help develop a Waterfront Land Use Plan in 1990, none were invited to early meetings held by a special group of Port Commission planners on the first commercial development that would break up public right-of-way along the Embarcadero--possibly the precedent for ultimately scuttling the whole idea of public access. Joe Luttrell's article provides means for us to participate in decisions about a project geared to dramatically change our slice of the waterfront.

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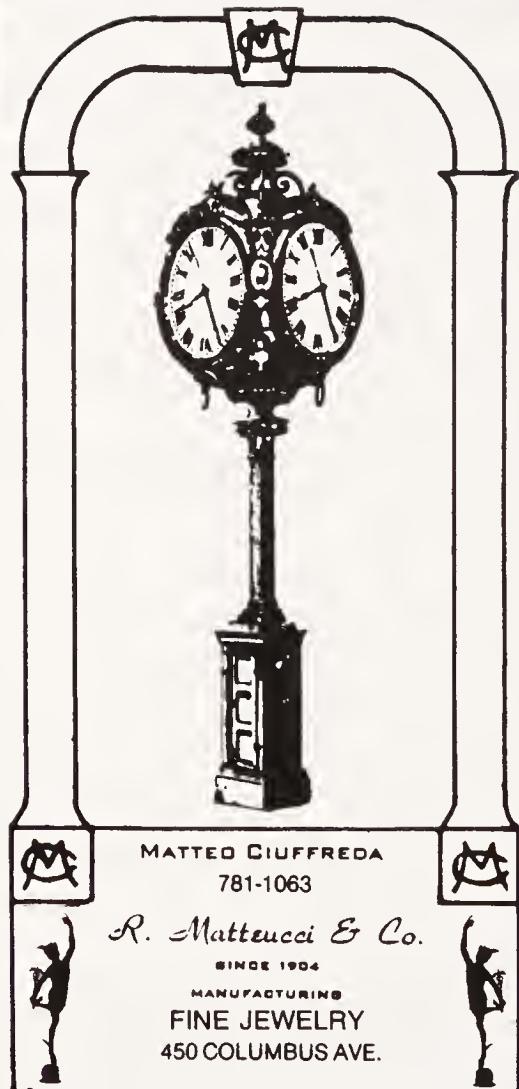
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## P R E S I D E N T ' S   L E T T E R

"Everything's coming up roses" describes Hill happenings during the last 3 months. After Rite Aid's lease on the Pagoda Palace was not renegotiated, the future looked brighter. Although City Hall took the credit, the magnificent year-long efforts of Telegraph Hill Dwellers, supported by our sister organizations in the Northeast Quadrant, caused Rite Aid to give up that location. We were a formidable opponent and, unfortunately, must resume our activity if Rite Aid selects another North Beach location. Aaron Peskin and I plan to meet with Rite Aid's regional management this month to encourage them to give up further attempts to locate here.

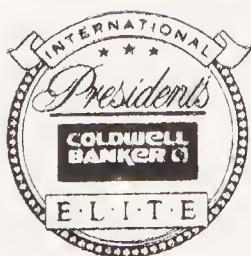
Another success occurred on October 20 at Probate Court when Telegraph Hill Dwellers was declared a beneficiary in the last will, unsigned and undated, of the late Jack Early. The \$100,000 ruling was made by Judge Isabela Horton Grant who had done her homework; she carefully reviewed the evi-

dence and declarations submitted on behalf of THD by our incredibly competent attorney, Catherine Duggan. Joe Butler, Howard Wong and, especially, Historian Rhoda Robinson, made significant contributions by providing documentary evidence supporting our case. Nancy Shanahan and Joe Luttrell provided legal input, and the Board of Directors supported the research and authorized funding for legal services. Although it may be many months before THD receives this bequest, much of it encumbered for specific purposes, the Board must begin to investigate ways to carry out Jack's wishes and to perpetuate his legacy by balancing spending and investing. We are also considering forming a non-profit entity which would allow us to receive tax-free donations, and to apply for grant money to

The President,  
Gerry Crowley



*cont. on pg 14*



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## THD BOARD RESOLUTIONS

*August 11, 1998*

The Board allocated \$50 to support Ballot Proposition E, also agreeing to include THD in the ballot argument to repeal Proposition H.

*September 8, 1998*

No motions passed

*October 13 1998*

The Board unanimously approved a motion to sup-

port interim zoning controls to temporarily prohibit restaurants, bars and pharmacies, subject to specified exceptions, and to protect small-scale storefronts and their uses in the North Beach Neighborhood Commercial District. Also approved was a motion to allow Board members and committee chairs to report their preferred e-mail identification to THD web master Peter Overmire.

## SOCIAL NEWS

*By Diana Blank and Mary Purdy-Read*

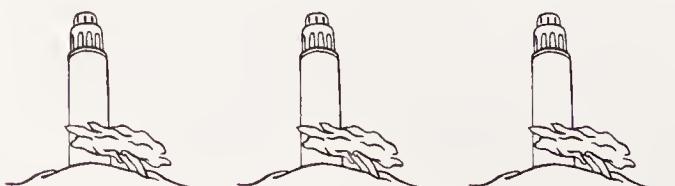
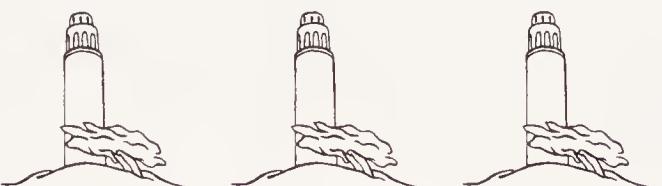
A General Membership dinner meeting was held August 17 at the newly renovated Basta Pasta Restaurant. Historian Gray Brechin presented a dynamic slide show, "Megafollies: What the Bay Area would be like if the architects and city planners had had their way." It envisions the freeways, skyscrapers, building density, and lost views that would have diminished the special character of San Francisco and its neighborhoods were it not for citizen protests. On October 15 a cocktail party was held at 15 Romolo Place, formerly the Basque Restaurant. Members and guests enjoyed the "speakeasy" decor and warmth of the newly renovated lounge, along with delicious snacks.

THDers who attended the November 2 General Membership dinner meeting at Buca Giovanni's enjoyed a wonderfully prepared dinner and interesting program. Captain John Goldberg gave a candid presentation on the organization and responsibilities

of Central Station's SFPD staff. Daniel Bacon of the San Francisco Historical Society talked about our neighborhood when it was the Barbary Coast. In the next Semaphore, you can read about the bronze plaques SFHS is placing on local streets.

Coming up--A cocktail party in January at Adolfo's Restaurant, and a General Membership dinner meeting in February. Members will receive postcard invitations to these events.

THD's annual holiday caroling event takes place Monday, December 21, right after "the lights go on" in Washington Square--new lighting, thanks to Herb Kosovitz and other members of a committee who worked hard for years to properly illuminate the soon-to-be landmarked square. Gather at 5:15. Caroling starts after the lights are switched on at 5:30.



# M E M B E R S H I P    R E P O R T

*By James Attwood*

## *Welcome to New Members*

Welcome to the members who have joined us since the publication of the last Semaphore: Leslie DeVore, Said Saltaji, Thomas Noyes, Krista Sullivan, Francis & Elizabeth Martin, Philip Williams, Donald Jans, Peggy Huff, Kathleen &

David Martin, Susan & Matt Mackowski, Leslie Devore, Carol Ringot, Moonshine, Jim Cook, John Mattos, Bob Woyciehowsky, Bob Pullum, Jeanne Kelley, Roseann Lynch, Martti Vallila, and William Rutter

## **M E M B E R S H I P    A P P L I C A T I O N**

Sign Up, or Sign a Friend Up, as a member of Telegraph Hill Dwellers.  
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# PLANNING AND ZONING COMMITTEE REPORT

*By Nancy Shanahan and  
Aaron Peskin*

*The following are updates of ongoing projects and information on new projects that have been proposed since the last Semaphore. If you want more information about a specific project or are interested in getting involved with the Planning & Zoning Committee please give Aaron a call at 986-7014.*

**PROJECTS IN THE TELEGRAPH HILL HISTORIC DISTRICT** (This historic district on the east side of Telegraph Hill was established by the Board of Supervisors in 1986).

1. **Grace Merchant Garden/Alta Street Condo Development** (20-30 Alta). The developers of this cliff site above the Filbert Steps are far from giving up or scaling back their project. At the time of this writing we have been informed that the EIR for this project will be issued for public comment in November. THD will analyze the EIR and submit comments. We will inform everyone when the EIR will be considered by the City's Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board and the Planning Commission.

**PROJECTS IN THE NORTHEAST WATERFRONT HISTORIC DISTRICT** (This historic warehouse district is bounded by The Embarcadero, Sansome, Broadway and Union Streets was established by the Board of Supervisors in 1983).

1. **Proposed Hotel at the Embarcadero and Broadway.** The Port of San Francisco and the City are moving forward with plans to develop a 300+ room luxury hotel on this site which also includes most of the block bounded by Broadway, Davis, Vallejo and Front Streets. The entire project lies within the Historic District. The Port called together an advisory committee which included one member from the Telegraph Hill Dwellers, Joe Luttrell. The committee was limited in what it was allowed to

discuss to general issues about bulk, height and design. When given the choice between an 84 foot and 65 foot high building, a majority of the committee recommended that the height be no greater than 65 feet high. Having apparently served its function, the Port has disbanded the committee and is in the process of publishing a Request for Proposals (RFP) from hotel developers. After the Port selects a developer, it will move ahead with obtaining approvals. There will be several more public hearings on this issue at the Port Commission and Planning Commission. We are monitoring this project very closely.

2. **150 Green Street.** This project to demolish a 2-story historic building within the Historic District and replace it with a six story office building is undergoing environmental review and the building owner is currently having an EIR prepared. THD is on record as being opposed to the demolition of this sound structure. We will review and comment on the EIR when it is circulated for review.

## **III. PROPOSED NEW LANDMARKS/HISTORIC DISTRICT**

1. **Washington Square Park Landmark Nomination.** The Landmarks Board will consider nominating Washington Square Park for City landmark status. Kate Nichol, a former Planning Dept staff, volunteered her time to prepare the landmark nomination case report. The Landmarks Board hearing is tentatively set for December 16. If you are interested in attending please let us know and we will keep you informed.

## **IV. NORTH BEACH NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL DISTRICT** (In 1987 the Board of Supervisors adopted the North Beach Neighborhood Commercial District Ordinance to maintain the

*continued on page 10*

# **NEIGHBORHOOD BEAUTIFICATION**

## **COMMITTEE REPORT**

*Co-Chairs Staci Shember and Suzanne Nelson*

Our first event was a very successful Open House in September at Gerry Crowley's home. Quite a few folks came to hear about the committee and express interest in joining us. We now have a great group as we finally get settled in to our "new" committee. We decided that the best meeting time would be the first Monday night of the month, to which anyone is welcome to attend. Please call for location.

### **AWARDS**

#### **People Who Make A Difference**

Our most special award, given only once a year, was presented to a most deserving neighbor at the last THD dinner at Buca Giovanni. For the past five years, Mark Bittner has dedicated his life to the study, protection, and care of our flock of wild, cherry-headed parakeets, commonly called the Telegraph Hill Gang. Their surprisingly large number today is almost certainly a direct result of that care and to many, the Gang is a delightful reminder that we share Telegraph Hill with a wonderful abundance of wildlife. As we may soon be saying farewell to Mark when he moves from his house on Greenwich, please join us in expressing our gratitude for this magnanimous gift. As this year's awardee, Mark's name has been added to our perpetual plaque and he received an engraved heart and certificate.

On a related note, a local documentary filmmaker, Judy Irving of IDG Films, is interested in making a documentary about Mark and the parakeets. THD has decided to support her efforts and our committee will be helping to host a fundraiser in January for the film. Mark has graciously agreed to give what may be the last of his neighborhood "parrot talks" before he sits down to write his book, Tales of the Urban Forest. More information will be forthcoming, but please feel free to contact Mark or

co-chair Staci Shember about this project.

**Special Thanks** awards were given to Peter Overmire and also to Ann Halsted and Wells Whitney. We recognized Peter for all his work in the creation and maintenance of the THD web site. He has recently updated and redesigned the site and has done a wonderful job. Check it out - [www.overmire.com/thd](http://www.overmire.com/thd). We also honored Ann and Wells for their great generosity over the years in allowing their home to be available for neighborhood meetings and get-togethers.

#### **Murals**

We are moving ahead to apply for funding for this project, which will be a major focus for 1999. We received a favorable response to our initial draft from the Mayor's Beautification Committee and are ready to go ahead refining our proposals. When the funding is secured we will be ready to start the competition(s) for the artists.

#### **Litter**

This is another major focus project for '99. We expect to begin having initial setup meetings in the next few weeks and would welcome any participation or input.

#### **New Members**

We are always pleased to add new members to our committee. If you don't have time to be a regular committee member but have special interest in the Mural or Litter projects, please let us know. Limited membership for some of these big projects and, as always, any new ideas or concerns are always welcome.

Please feel free to contact us at [suzanne\\_nelson@yahoo.com](mailto:suzanne_nelson@yahoo.com) or [sirrobyn@msn.com](mailto:sirrobyn@msn.com).

## Planning and Zoning *cont. from pg 8*

character and mix of businesses in North Beach).

1. **Rite Aid Store in the Pagoda Palace Theater** (1741 Powell). As everyone knows, Rite Aid withdrew its application for a conditional use permit at the Pagoda Palace Theater. But while we won the battle to keep the mega-store out of the theater, the war to have a large Rite Aid store in the heart of North Beach's commercial area appears to be far from over. We expect that Rite Aid will continue to pursue another location in the near future. Meanwhile, congratulations to everyone who worked on this monumental task to keep Rite Aid from marring Washington Square Park and the heart of North Beach. Thanks also to the North Beach Neighbors, Russian Hill Neighbors and the North Beach Chamber of Commerce for all of their efforts.

2. **North Beach Garage.** "STOP", the group fighting the garage project, has appealed the Superior Court's ruling in favor of the City and the City Parking Authority. We understand that the City has had to put the project back out to bid because the original bids came in significantly over budget. As a result, we understand that the City has decided to increase the project budget to match the bids which will result in the City's most expensive public parking garage ever built.

3. **1548 Stockton Street** (Chevy's Fuzio chain). They've moved in but they still don't have a liquor license. Apparently due to several protests of Chevy's application for a liquor license (including one by the North Beach Chamber of Commerce) the Alcoholic Beverage Control Board still has not issued a permit. A group of area residents held a spirited one-hour protest at Fuzio's "soft" opening in September which garnered some favorable media coverage for the neighborhood efforts to preserve North Beach's character. Meanwhile, Chevy's has opened another Fuzio on Chestnut Street in the Marina, is scheduled to open another soon at the Embarcadero Center for a total of four Fuzio restau-

## Special Thanks

We would like to give special thanks to Rhoda Robinson for her timely and exhaustive research. She aptly established the long-standing relationship between THD and Jack Early, thereby greatly contributing to the successful conclusion in THD's probate lawsuit.

Neighborhood Beautification Committee

rants thus far in the City. Next, Chevy's plans to open a Fuzio in Davis, California and Washington D.C.

4. **Bauer-Schweitzer Malting Plant, a designated City Landmark** (530 Chestnut). The P & Z Committee heard a presentation by Steve Vettel, Oz Erickson and Mark Fasio regarding a new proposal to convert the abandoned Malting Plant to 82 units of housing with 90 parking places. While the proposal would adaptively reuse the portion of the site which fronts on Francisco Street, the building which fronts on Chestnut Street would be demolished. The proposal calls for preserving two of the 15 silos which are currently on the site. An earlier, similar, proposal was approved by the Landmarks Board and Planning Commission in 1991 — it consisted of 122 units of housing, 134 parking spaces and called for preserving 6 of the 15 silos.

5. **2 Nobles Alley.** The Planning Department released a negative declaration for this project to demolish a small cottage and replace it with a 4 story building. The project has been modified from the project originally presented to the P & Z Committee to include ground floor retail, offices at the second floor and one 2-level condominium unit at the third and fourth stories. After reviewing the modified project the P & Z Committee recommended a letter be sent which lauded the project sponsor for these changes but addressing several unresolved design concerns.

## Planning and Zoning

### V. UPDATES ON OTHER PROJECTS/ISSUES

1. **1301 Sansome Street** (Walters Warehouse). At the P & Z Committee meeting in September, the project sponsor discussed a proposal to fill in the open space on the roof between the two existing "modernist" structures with a new higher structure. Members of the Committee were concerned that this proposal would result in destroying the character of this building which is listed on the City's historical survey. A group of nearby neighbors wrote the Planning Department a letter in opposition to this proposal. Subsequently, the project sponsor, abandoned the proposed roof top addition. The opportunity to improve the parking area at the base of Filbert Street (west of Sansome Street) is going forward. THD is working with the residents of the Filbert Steps/Napier Lane and the project sponsors to further this effort to beautify the parking area at the base of Filbert (west of Sansome Street).

2. **North Point Theater** (corner of Bay and Powell). THD and the North Beach Chamber of Commerce joined with local neighbors and mer-

chants to oppose a Conditional Use Permit to convert the vacant theater building to 540 units of mini storage. The Planning Commission ignored the Planning Department's recommendation in favor of the project, and voted 5-1 to deny the project.

3. **1403-1405 Montgomery Street**. The project applicant's appeal of the Planning Commission's denial of the project to merge these two buildings and remove several rental units has, at the project applicant's request, not yet been heard by the Board of Appeals. Meanwhile, the building owner is in the process of evicting the tenants in all four units in the 1403 Montgomery Building under the Ellis Act, a state law. Another Ellis Act eviction is in process at 121 Varennes.

4. **115 Telegraph Hill and 361-377 Filbert** (Filbert Steps). A Board of Appeals hearing on the two separate appeals of this project (to demolish three structures and replace them with a six-level, three unit condominium development) has, at the developer's request, been rescheduled for December 16. Concerns about the project include the loss of dwelling units (11 units will be replaced with 4) and

*cont. on pg 32*

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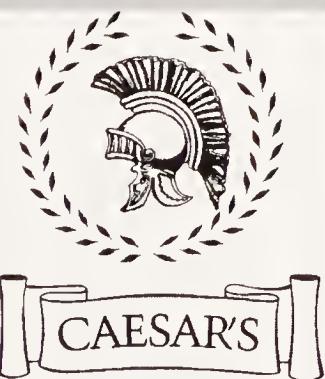
That's Us! Pete Overmire (989-3945), a longtime THDer and former officer has set up this exclusive site for Telegraph Hill Dwellers. Access it to see the sensational look he has created, impressive to local and international browsers alike. Lend him photographs and graphics relevant to the Hill that he can scan in. Call or e-mail information about upcoming meetings in the neighborhood and at City agencies, and ideas and concerns you want the rest of us to know about between Semaphores.

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## PARKING AND TRAFFIC COMMITTEE

The following article incorporates highlights of recent Parking and Traffic Committee issues. Thanks to the inspiration of Joe Luttrell's "Rip Van Winkle" article in November's North Beach Now..

### *What If.....A Parking and Traffic Dream for North Beach.*

By Howard Wong, AIA

In the course of history, the professions of City Planning, Urban Design, Master Planning and Urban Architecture were created because of sensible desires to efficiently and effectively create quality urban environments. No easy task. Look around the world and there are plenty of failures. But if we can learn from planning successes, wherever in the world and whenever in time, then we might begin to incrementally incorporate those ideal concepts into contemporary plans.

San Francisco, North Beach and Telegraph Hill are certainly unique in the world. Watch any tourist. Follow their fresh visual perspectives and rediscover the unique splendors, geographic wonders, cultural diversities, architectural gems, historical richness and dynamic urban mixtures that we, as locals, often take for granted. The difficulty of balancing growth, change and improvement with preservation of character and neighborhood scale falls on the shoulders of all of us. Only a few decades ago, successful efforts prevented high-rises on Telegraph Hill, freeways through the heart of North Beach and development of beloved parks, landmarks and scenic neighborhoods. And thanks to our predecessors in 1899, quarrymen were stopped from even totally leveling the Hill. We have an obligation to continue this heritage of community vigilance.

THD's Parking and Traffic Committee examines a complex component of our neighborhood. Parking, traffic and transportation, combined with bicyclists and pedestrians, are the circulatory lifeblood of the community. Yet, parking, traffic and transportation are often criticized as deficient or detrimental to quality of life. For some people, the

dynamic flow of traffic is a vibrant and exciting part of urban life. For others, the dynamic movement of people is equally symbolic of a City. What could the ultimate parking and traffic plan for North Beach be like in a future dream world?

Traffic flow and pedestrian movement could have greater degrees of separation and identity. Primary streets would have wider sidewalks, with minimal parking, lined with trees, decorative light standards and sidewalk cafes. On these grand boulevards, traffic and transit would be designed to move with few obstructions. Secondary streets would have a quieter orientation, with a smaller scale of decorative street lighting, paving textures to slow traffic, smaller/ uniform trees, neighborhood parking and district-identifying lighting/ landscaping design.

A system of perimeter public garages would lie on the outskirts of North Beach, discreetly hidden within commercial complexes along the waterfront and financial district. The garages would be primarily underground or low-scale. A neighborhood shuttle "train", with multiple linked cars, would loop from the perimeter garages through the neighborhood. If situated strategically, the perimeter garages would be within walking distance of major destinations. Certain street blocks would become pedestrian piazzas with fountains, landscaping, kiosks and seating. The piazzas would provide neighborhood

*cont. on pg 14*

### **SFPD Hot Line 553-0123**

Central Station's Captain Goldberg asks the neighborhood to use this number to report non-emergency problems such as illegal parking, and tour bus drivers who idle engines near residences and make prohibited trips to Coit Tower. The Hot Line dispatcher will send an officer to the site, or else help you direct your complaint to the proper agency.

## Parking and Traffic *cont. from pg 13*

identity for surrounding blocks, as well as community pedestrian pathways and linkages between focal points.

Public Transit would be emphasized. Solar-powered buses would allow overhead electric lines to be removed. Smaller shuttle vans, with greater frequency of recirculation, would loop around North Beach only, serving specific local needs. Possible local assessment funds, business subsidies, tourist taxes, reallocations of existing property/ sales taxes or increased patronage/ revenue would fund expanded public transit.

Ferry and boat service would skip along the waterfront, as well as connect to outer cities. Ferry transportation nodes would link to shuttles and buses. A series of loop canals and waterways could extend from the Bay into limited portions of the neighborhood, providing an interesting alternative transportation route. Some piers could be retrofitted for space-age helicopters or gliders, providing fast connections to the East Bay and Airport. An integrated regional public transportation system would encourage use of all modes of mass transit.

A Piazza would surround Coit Tower, with an outdoor restaurant/ café and artist gathering place. Motor vehicles would be restricted from Telegraph Hill Boulevard, with only resident traffic and parking. Pedestrian access to Pioneer Park and Coit Tower would be linked to all sides of the Hill. A sky tram would extend from Pier 39 to Pioneer Park, becoming a "must-do" self-sufficient transportation system, subsidized by wharf businesses.

## President's Letter *cont. from pg 5*

preserve and enhance neighborhood character. This entity could also be the recipient of bequests from other THD'ers. Jack Early was a private man of few words who, during the last year of his life, sent me several notes with messages like, "doing great;" "good job," and "give 'em hell." In death, Jack was eloquent.

Early in October Aaron Peskin, Claire McGhee

Today, some thoughtful planning is already in progress. Community Valet Zones are being arranged for several test locations in North Beach. Partially underwritten by neighborhood businesses, vehicles will easily find highly visible valet zones, parking for a reasonable price. In order to establish these Community Valet Zones, valet companies need more rental parking. Any ideas? Are there any existing private/ public garages, school lots, church lots, paved lots or innovative uses of land available for rent, especially in evenings and weekends?

Working with the City, we are encouraging a more efficient use of colored zones, dual use colored zones, enforcement of parking regulations, specialized short-term meters and effective groupings of zones/ meters.

The Parking and Traffic Committee is also working on a Parking and Traffic Master Plan for North Beach. The Master Plan will include specific recommendations, such as locations/ quantities of colored zones, parking layouts, use of existing garages and planning of delivery times, as well as general and regional concepts. We welcome your best ideas. And most of all, your dreams. Feel welcome to attend the Parking and Traffic Committee meetings on Second Saturdays of each month, 11:00 am, at Little City Restaurant, Union at Powell Streets.

*For further information, feel free to call Howard at 557-4759 work or 982-5055 home or the P/T Committee.*

and I met with Supervisor Mark Leno to discuss our concerns for the North Beach Commercial District and City Planning's failure to apply code provisions. After a 20-minute discussion Supervisor Leno, himself a small business owner, stated that he would champion a one-year moratorium banning openings of new restaurants, bars and pharmacies in North Beach. While not a solution to the problem, this

*cont. on pg 16*

# MEGA-HOTEL LOOMS AT EMBARCADERO AND BROADWAY

By Joe Luttrell

How would you like a 300+ room hotel on The Embarcadero at Broadway, one which would extend two city blocks up Broadway past Davis all the way to Front Street? This is what will be built if the Port Commission has its way, in a little noticed, but truly major project it's embarking on now. The proposed hotel would occupy four separate parcels which have been public open space for many years. It would tower over two adjoining structures (historic buildings) and would, for the first time in the history of the Northeast Waterfront, create a formidable visual barrier on the Embarcadero. It would also create the first major exception to the scale of the buildings between the Telegraph Hill cliffs and the waterfront.

How has this plan been formulated without most of us knowing about it? Basically, because the Port has kept it pretty much a secret. There has been no effort to hold public meetings in the Chinatown, North Beach or Telegraph Hill communities, and very little attempt (if any) to involve City organizations such as San Francisco Tomorrow and SPUR. It's true that the Port convened (and has now disbanded) a public advisory group. I was a member of that group representing Telegraph Hill Dwellers. We were told from the start we could not question the Port's decision to build a hotel on the site though, at first, we were informed that a small hotel would not necessarily be objectionable. But at our third meeting we were told that Mayor Brown and the Port Director, Douglas Wong, had decided the hotel would have to be a big one.

The site of the proposed hotel is entirely within the Northeast Waterfront Historic District, on blocks bounded by the Embarcadero, Broadway, Front and Vallejo. The City ordinance for that district--together with the Port's own Waterfront Plan and the City's Master Plan and related documents--were all con-

ceived to preserve the district's present scale: taller buildings on the hill, lower buildings along the Embarcadero and Broadway and see that the scale preserves an open space view of almost all of the Northeast Waterfront which the proposed hotel would destroy, once and for all.

The Port Commission's justification for building the big hotel is to make money. But should financial considerations be the sole justification for this massive development while excluding all other options, such as housing--a more dependable income source not contingent on unpredictable revenue? And should the Port be permitted to make that decision with no real public input? This project's on the fast track. Because the Port pre-supposes the hotel will be built it's already issued an RFQ, a Request for Qualification, to developers for their response in late November. From that short list, RFP's, Requests for Proposals, will be solicited.

What can we do? First, let the Port know how you feel about the project. We are free to propose other options for developing the site and to express our concerns about the secrecy under which plans for the hotel were conceived, asking for community meetings with public input. It's not too late to do something about this mis-adventure. Ultimately, the Board of Supervisors will have to approve what the Port wants to do; this big development faces serious legal obstacles but we can't hope it will go away. The Port is determined to build it, and Mayor Brown wants to see it go up. Contact the decision makers:

**The Mayor's Office.** Phone 554-6141. Fax 554-6160. **Denise McCarthy, Port Commission President.** Phone 421-6443X11; Fax 433-1352. **Douglas Wong, Port Director.** Phone 274-0406; Fax 274-0412.

To stay apprised of what is going on, and help in the effort, give me a call at 255-6799.

## S T E P      I N T O      H I S T O R Y

Currently, the people who use Pioneer Park and the park's plants, shrubs and hillsides are not coexisting too well. Many of the paths and hillsides are unsafe and the vegetation is being trampled and the soil eroded by people shortcutting through the park. The planned renovations for Pioneer Park include new rock-walled stairs that will make the area more pedestrian-friendly, while allowing the damaged park to be replanted. The renovations also include a terrace lawn overlooking the bay, improved lighting, plantings of native trees and shrubs, and a ramp for stroller and wheelchair access to Coit Tower and its murals.

The core of Pioneer Park was purchased and donated to the city by private citizens in 1876. Citizen groups rallied to its defense at the (last) turn of the century. Lillie Coit's bequest was used to add the tower 50 years after the park's dedication. The "Step into History" program was started to acknowledge the ongoing role of private citizens in the creation and protection of the park.

The risers of the new stairs leading up to Coit Tower will carry the names of those who have contributed to this phase of the park's history. Donors have requested tiles to commemorate births, weddings, beloved family members, neighborhood businesses, even pets.

Another \$25,000 in private contributions is needed to complete funding for the renovation. 50 Tiles. Will your name be on one of them?

---

Three new stairways will be added to Pioneer Park at Coit Tower. The vertical face of each step in the new stairways will contain five 12" x 4" stone tiles. Each tile will accommodate up to 30 half-inch high letters and spaces. In recognition of each \$500 donation, one tile will be etched with the name you designate. A donation of \$2500 will reserve all five tiles on a single stair. Only names may appear on the tiles, no phrases, remarks, dedications, etc. Contributions are tax deductible. To reserve your tile(s), complete the form on the next page.

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## President's Letter *cont. from pg 16*

time-out is an opportunity to work with City Planning staff to draft stricter legislation to submit to the Board of Supervisors for approval. We applaud Supervisor Mark Leno for his responsiveness.

Supervisor Tom Ammiano also deserves kudos from residents of the North Beach-Telegraph Hill community for his election to President of the Board of Supervisors. As an independent voice and an issues-oriented supervisor, his election bodes well for San Francisco neighborhoods. He has always been accessible, personally responding to voice mail and e-mail messages. In neighborhood versus developer issues we can count on Supervisor Ammiano. I was proud to be part of a successful fundraiser on his behalf in October.

Howard Wong and I met with Mayor Brown and with other neighborhood leaders at a November 2 meeting called by the San Francisco Neighborhood Alliance. When I had my turn, I told the Mayor that we were stating the same concerns--all of them City Planning issues--that we had explained to him 14 months ago at another meeting. I mentioned that knowledge of our planning problems was widespread, that I had been interviewed by a writer in Washington, D. C. for the December issue of Planning Magazine, and contacted twice by the B. B. C. in London. The day after our meeting I was encouraged by the election results which indicated that neighborhoods are back, and just maybe the Mayor will listen to us. A true test will occur as we

## Step into History Donor Information

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: Day \_\_\_\_\_ Evening \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is my donation for \$ \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_ tiles at \$500 each.

Please make checks payable to Friends of Recreation and Parks/Pioneer Park, a tax deductible foundation under sec. 501(c)(3).

Mail to: Pioneer Park, 1308 Montgomery #1, San Francisco, California 94133.

The Pioneer Park Project is a public/private partnership of the Telegraph Hill Dwellers with San Francisco Beautiful, the Department of Public works, and the Recreation and Parks Department.

Individual Tile Name(s): Please indicate exact spelling below, maximum 30 letters and spaces.

\_\_\_\_\_

Multiple Tile Names: Indicate relative position desired, left to right - 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

1 \_\_\_\_\_

2 \_\_\_\_\_

3 \_\_\_\_\_

4 \_\_\_\_\_

5 \_\_\_\_\_

## **SOMETHING BULLY TO DO FOR THE BEAR**

*By June A. Osterberg*

The campaign to raise money to repair the vandalized bear of Washington Square has evolved from Jars on Bars to wine in a glass.

Community-minded Ralph and Val Tashjian, whose Little City restaurant is right across Union Street from the site of the missing bear, have volunteered to host a fundraiser for the bear in mid-January. The date was chosen with the post-holidays letdown in mind. January is usually bleak and drab and always dark. People have had to return to Reality after the fun and festivities of Thanksgiving and Christmas. The Tashjians hope to dash the dol-drums for one night, at least, and benefit the battered bear at the same time. They will host the wine and hors d'oeuvres for a donation of \$20 to the bear repair fund.

The date is January 13, and the time, 6:00-8:30 PM. This is the first announcement of the Little City

party for the bear, and the committee asks that you mark your 1999 calendars now for this winter brightener.

The campaign has raised a thousand dollars from hundreds of anonymous friends of the bear, who placed dollar bills and change and fives and tens in the Jars on Bars in North Beach. There also were a few generous checks. Now we have a shiny opportunity to support public art in North Beach and make a statement against attacks on sculptures by faceless, anti-social individuals, and have a pleasant winter evening among friends and neighbors besides.

Those wishing to pay in advance and get a head start on the good wines and hors d'oeuvres at Little City on January 13 may send their \$20 checks to 722 Filbert, San Francisco 94133. Make checks payable to San Francisco Art Commission.

## **SUNDAYS AT THE SHRINE OF ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI**

*By Helen von Ammon*

It seems such a long time ago. On my own for the first time and younger than my age, I was new to San Francisco and welcomed the opportunity to share a small Nob Hill apartment across the street from Grace Cathedral. While a young'un, disciplined by Southern Baptist parents, I was horrified by my roomie's "loose" boys 'n' booze behavior. Disoriented and shy, I was scared spitless. Grace Cathedral's propinquity, great structure and the music of Sunday services became a metaphor for my troubled spirit. The Cathedral's stained glass window on Jones Street delighted me each day. Asymmetrical shapes of "my" window glowed deep, rich crimson, lapis lazuli, golden sienna, glorious

colors which continued to influence my oil paintings long after I had moved away.

I did not know him then, but it was probably John Renke, whose performances on the mighty Grace Cathedral organ thrilled me during that troublesome time. A native San Franciscan, as a youngster John was obsessed by the pipe organ and studied this difficult instrument in high school. He gave his first organ concert at the ancient age of fifteen. After extensive music studies, John's first job was Associate Organist and Choirmaster at Grace Cathedral where he remained for fifteen years. It is our incredibly good fortune that this same John Renke, whose music I enjoyed so much in the past,

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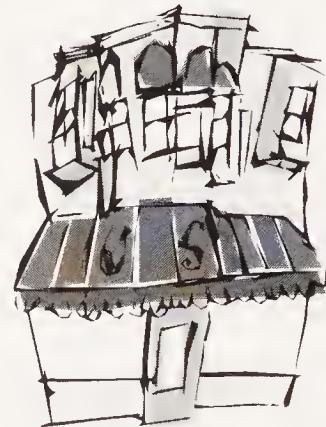
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## Sundays at the Shrine

*cont. from pg 18*

is now Director of Music at the Shrine of St. Francis of Assisi.

North Beach residents mourned the closing of St. Francis of Assisi church on July 1, 1994. Archbishop of San Francisco William Levada and the Franciscan Friars envisioned reopening the church as a Shrine church without the myriad parish responsibilities to its members from birth to beyond death. It was essential that this Shrine be a public place of worship with music and inspiring surroundings, a rewarding experience for all people.

When the Shrine opened on February 22, 1998, John Renke was hired in a great leap of faith--were concerts a possibility? If so when, how, and with what funds?

John's decision to provide free concerts each Sunday at 4:00 PM became a reality, in part because, "I called in long-time chits and sorta talked musicians into it." His many colleagues, all professional musicians, graciously perform for a pittance. Despite the paucity of funds, musicians call him with ideas; they're eager to perform in this intimate setting with excellent acoustics. Small chamber works, a choir, solo voices, even a guitar, which would be lost in bigger churches, are perfect for the Shrine church. Just two examples of the wonderful response from superb musicians are violinist Michael Sands performing with harpsichordist Phebe Craig. Dean Applegate's Cantores in Ecclesia came from Portland, Oregon, to sing a program honoring St. Francis of Assisi.

Different programs are scheduled each Sunday afternoon through January, 1999. John Renke performs frequently on the Schoenstein organ; as a staff musician, he does not receive a fee. Contributions have been generation and almost break even, but John is adamant: "We do not need to remunerate musicians for their work." The

Shrine considers music an outreach to the whole community and a very important part of its ministry.

To enjoy the Shrine one need not be Catholic, or have any formal faith at all. The church is open all day providing a serene setting where visitors may stop in to rest and contemplate; with luck, someone may be practicing the organ. People come by to pray, to converse with one of the friendly Friars, or to enjoy the quiet ambience of murals, statues, the softly flickering glow of countless candles, and Father Steve's beautiful seasonal flower arrangements. During its first six months as a Shrine, visitors from 58 countries have signed the guest book and added enthusiastic comments.

Christmas Eve at the Shrine will be memorable: An 11:15 PM carol service will be followed by a midnight service--an orchestra and the Shrine's superb choir will sing a Mass by Franz Schubert. As always, there will be no charge for this, or for any of the regularly scheduled Sunday afternoon concerts, and all are welcome!

A personal note: I've visited many Catholic churches and still don't know when to sit, stand or genuflect, but it never seems to matter. If you enjoy inspirational music, do come--at least once!

The Shrine is in the heart of North Beach at Columbus and Vallejo. You are welcome Sundays at 12:15 Mass, at 3:15 PM when the vesper service is sung, or just come for the 4:00 PM concert which runs 30-45 minutes. Not enough time to fidget, no parking probs, no tix, come in casual clothes. I'll be there; come and tell me you loved it. And on the way out, share what you can spare for the donation box. As they say in the south, "Y'all know the way, come back y'heah!"

**Happy Holidays!**

## A TURNAROUND STORY: LOCAL SCHOOL HAS REASONS TO REJOICE!

By Karen Law, Principal, Garfield School

The Garfield Elementary School community has much to rejoice during the Holiday Season. After months of dedicated reform efforts by administration, staff and parents, much has improved in school climate and student achievement.

In the past, test scores have been disheartening. Morale suffered. Then the school jump-started an internal reform effort two years ago; improving student achievements in literacy and math were my central goals. We focused on fine-tuning the math curriculum, then implemented "Success For All" (SFA), a cutting-edge reading program from Johns Hopkins University which requires an uninterrupted 90-minute block of school-wide reading instruction each morning with students grouped by reading ability, not grade level. Creative, versatile staff are also working collaboratively to incorporate the San Francisco Unified School District's Literacy Place Program, including its computer software, into the SFA curriculum. The results have been phenomenal as seen in our Spring 1998 standardized test scores. Most important, students aren't just performing better on tests, they're reading more! According to Newton, a Chinese bilingual second grader, "We read all the time now. Reading is good!" The increased focus on high academic and behavioral standards have led to a keener sense of personal responsibility and self-discipline among students. Longtime employees see dramatic improvement in

student behavior, and visitors compliment the school's calm, pleasant environment that is most conducive to learning.

Last April, Garfield School became the business partner of a local company, The Computer Network (CNET). Over 40 CNET employees visit the school weekly to serve as reading tutors, assistant computer teachers and lunch buddies. These volunteers play an important role in helping our students make impressive gains, they provide great service to society by helping to prepare the future work force. We are very thankful for this partnership.

Garfield staff are dedicated to continuing the momentum we have established together, and to reach new heights in student achievement. We welcome and encourage local families with school-age children to visit our school and experience the quality instruction in our classrooms. Every Thursday is Visitors' Day at Garfield School, 420 Filbert Street, telephone 291-7924.

Attention Parents: Enrollment in public schools isn't automatic--you have to register your child. San Francisco's Unified School District is now enrolling students for the 1999-2000 school year. The application period is from 11/2/98 to 1/8/99. To register, go directly to the school, or to the Educational Placement Center (EPC) at 135 Van Ness Avenue. Questions? Call EPC at 241-6085 or visit our district's website at [www.sfusd.k12.ca.us](http://www.sfusd.k12.ca.us).

### **House Hunting:**

Peter Macchiarini needs a 2-bedroom home by February 1. If you know of an available lower level unit at reasonable rent, call Peter's son, Dan, at 982-2229.

## SNAPSHOTS

By Jerry Hurtado

THDers John & June Coyle married in 1962. June was a successful real estate salesperson and owned her house and rental property on the Hill. John was an architect who at the time flew to jobs all over the US. As June tells it, "We were introduced and enjoyed each others company, but a couple of weeks went by, and I hadn't heard from him. Then one morning at 6 o'clock John called me from the airport. He said he just finished a job in Texas and asked me if I would meet him for a walk across the Golden Gate Bridge. I had a days work lined up, so I told him no. There was a long pause. Then he said in a very dejected voice, that it was 'a great pity'. I thought to myself that I was either going to fall in love and marry this guy or I was going to be real mad at myself, but I said okay I'd meet him. We had a lovely walk and breakfast afterwards at a restaurant that was located by the tollbooth. We married shortly thereafter." That's how it started. Now after all these years on Telegraph Hill, John & June Coyle have moved to new digs on flatter terrain with the luxury of off-street parking. Interestingly, June sold to her tenants, Jeff Johnson and Michelle Haney. She recalled that her former landlord sold the building to her when it was almost impossible for a single woman to get a loan—even for a house. Thank you, June & John Coyle, for being good neighbors. We'll miss you.

Jim Cook is a genuinely nice guy. Many neighbors have come to know him because he waters all the trees on Vallejo Street. He will greet you with a big smile and a friendly hello as he effortlessly lugs two five-gallon pales of water up the hill to water the next thirsty tree. Jim explained, "When we planted the trees we were told that they would die if they weren't watered properly. Basically I saw that the trees were dying. So I got a bucket and started watering the trees around my house from my garage. Eventually that got expanded, and now I am watering the whole block. I like doing it. I get a little exer-



L/R Dwellers Martti Vallila , Colin & Naomi Campbell, June & John Coyle, and Sally Gould enjoy a goodbye breakfast at Mo's on Grant.

cise, and I have met a lot of the neighbors. In the old days you'd be a stranger if you didn't know your neighbor."

Jim Cook was raised in the farming community of Visalia, California. He graduated from Golden West High School in 1987. Working the land is the main occupation, but Jim knew he didn't want to be a farmer. As Jim puts it, "I was lucky because the first job that came along was installing fire sprinkler systems for a small outfit in the Valley. They didn't pay much and the apprenticeship was four years long. I had to go to trade school at night all that time. But I grew with the job. I like the work."

Jim's a licensed sprinkler installer working for Allan's Automatic Fire Sprinkler Company. Recently on a job at #1 Kearny which is a 1902 structure, Jim made a discovery. "We installed a high pressure (200 lb. test) sprinkler system throughout the building. As I explored some crawl-space between the walls I discovered empty sardine and fruit cans. I figured that this was what was left of a construction worker's lunch. You can imagine in those days how hard the men had to work. A lunch of sardines, fruit and probably bread would be nutritious; providing the energy needed to get through the

day."

Jim and his wife Jennifer moved into the neighborhood four years ago just about the time the Telegraph Hill Dwellers celebrated its 40th anniversary by planting 400 trees on Telegraph Hill. Jim's lovely daughter from a prior marriage visits often. "Ellie's energetic just like me. One of our favorite activities together is to ride on a special tandem mountain-bike we rent from Golden Gateway Bicycle on Columbus at Chestnut. The path along the waterfront to Fort Point is a favorite for us. You have to rent the bikes early though. There's a limited number and if you ever saw the look of disappointment on my daughter's face the one time we couldn't get one, you'd understand why I am there when the door opens."

Caroline Capitano moved to Telegraph Hill three years ago. Even though she lived here in her youth, it was so long ago that she didn't know many people. "So at the urging of my friend Amy Stone I joined the Dwellers for its social activities and to be kept abreast on what is happening in the neighborhood." While she was at it, Caroline joined the Dolphin Club at Aquatic Park. She needed an exercise program and liked to swim. Referring to the set of buoys that stretch the length of Aquatic Park Caroline said, "I had to get over the hurdle of swimming in cold water, but once having done that, I now regularly swim to the flag and back. Conditions in the Bay are always changing; tides, wind, and weather. You're guaranteed a workout. Thank God the salt water is buoyant. That's a plus!"

By her own admission, Caroline Capitano was a precocious child—not always learning what she should be learning. "I was hell to the adults in my life and utterly bored with school. I would much rather work and make some money. My first job at the age of ten was folding linen at a French laundry. That gave me a measure of independence I enjoyed. In 1973 I passed the GED at Galileo High School and went off to my first real job as a nurse's aide. From there I progressed to licensed vocational nurse (LVN). At nineteen, I entered a hospital based nurs-

ing program to get my RN. Then I joined the Army and went to war as a Captain assigned to a surgical unit in Pliku, Vietnam."

During the course of all of this Caroline had met "Mr. Right", Al Vandyke, who played football for the Chicago Bears. "We were together for 20 years and had two great boys together; Zachariah and Genesis. Sadly, my husband Al died very young of a heart attack. That left me to raise the kids as a single mom. I'm happy to say they are both in college today and doing just fine."

"By this time, don't ask me how I did it, I had became a nurse practitioner and continued part-time at UC Davis to finish medical school requirements so that I could apply to medical school." In 1995 Caroline graduated from Western University of Health Sciences in Pomona, California. She is now finishing her third year of internal medicine residency. "Next year I'm chief resident, and then I plan to do a fellowship in hematology/oncology which specializes in diseases of the blood and cancer."

Graziano Lucchesi was raised in San Cassiano de Contri, a terraced medieval village halfway up 4000-foot Mt. Prato Fiorito in Tuscany. San



*Jim Cook and daughter Ellie stop their bicycle-built-for-two long enough to pose for this photo at Aquatic Park.*



*Windswept, Caroline Capitano enjoys sailing on the Bay.*

cont. from pg 23



*During a brief break, Graziano Lucchesi stands by his espresso machine at Caffe Puccini on Columbus Avenue.*

Cassiano was at first a Roman way station. In 900AD a great tower was built in the center of the town for protection. The tower stands 30 feet square at the base and rises straight up to a height of 80 feet. In 1200AD a cathedral was built and the tower was incorporated with the addition of bells to chime the time, ring out to celebrate or toll to mourn a passing.

With excitement in his voice Graziano recounts, "My uncle was the Campanaro, the bell ringer. He would take me up into the dizzying heights of the tower and show me how to ring the giant bell for festivities and funerals and how to crank the pulleys to raise the heavy weights that drove the clock mechanism. That was exciting stuff for a little kid!"

Besides school, there were always chores to do. "You didn't waste a lot of time. For example, our rabbits liked acacia leafs. I would pick them on the way home from school. If I saw a piece of firewood alongside the road, I'd bring that home to store it on the woodpile. We'd gather mushrooms. There was always something to do."

Nevertheless the children of San Cassiano still had time to play. "Imagine playing soccer on narrow sloping streets of stone. Heck, nothing in that town was level! But, we compensated and had a lot of fun. It was a wonderful place to grow up in."

Graziano left Italy when he was sixteen. "My mother, Dominica, her family was mostly all over in the U.S. and she wanted us to join them—so we did. My first job here was at Simi Company. They made

decorative statues for furniture showrooms. I was there for three years, but I wasn't learning English. So I took a job as busboy at Orsi's restaurant on Bush Street in the Financial District. There I learned English."

Graziano Lucchesi eventually learned the butcher business and worked at Little City Meat Market on Stockton at Vallejo for many years. During this time he married his sweetheart, Debbie Gianfranceschi, who was raised on Lombard Street, attended Sts. Peter and Paul School and Cathedral Hill High School graduating in 1970. Life was good for Graziano and Debbie. Then one day it got better.

The former owner of Caffe' Puccini approached Graziano with an offer he couldn't refuse. He bought the business. And though he continues to improve the place, he's kept the original warm and comfortable feel the same. "Lino Simonetti sold me the place because he believed I would continue what he started. I have honored his wish." The Caffe' Puccini features its own marvelous blend of coffee for espresso, fresh desserts made daily on the premises, and a Minestrone to die for. There is outside seating.

Graziano Lucchesi led the fight to allow outside tables and chairs on Columbus. "Initially, City Hall treated me like I was an alien. There were some restaurants in town that had licenses for outside tables, but they wouldn't consider expanding the program. So, one day I put tables and chairs out front. Some of the other restaurants did the same. It took City Hall three months to come tell us we couldn't do that. Then I got a petition signed by 3000 people who liked the tables outside. I had Vranas VanHoyt, a local artist, paint a cover for what became a book containing the petition. We went to City Hall as a delegation and handed the book to then Supervisor Angela Alioto. She carried the day for us and now we have tables in front of all the restaurants and cafes in North Beach. The people love it!"

Colin Campbell and Naomi Marcus are partners in marriage and work. Colin is a photographer and

## JOHN AND JUNE COYLE LEAVE TELEGRAPH HILL

By Patricia Cady

Seeing the Coyles completing the tasks necessary to move away, I felt as mournful as the Chinese poet whose garden reminded him of happier times. For the decades they lived in the brown-shingled house on Vallejo Street, guests entered their bright blue front door and usually stayed much too long. A brief visit somehow turned into an afternoon of rich chit-chat, especially satisfying sitting by a fire at dusk watching the downtown lights blink on.

Members of THD for many years, John was easily spotted at dinner meetings, garrulous in his signature Guyabara shirt, his nametag prominent on his forehead while June spoke, in her soft way, with friends at a corner table. John was a WWII pilot who has kept the old flying buddies in touch with each other, making two cross-country visits in 1998. After the war he started his long career as an architect by snagging a prized job with John Lyon Reid who ran the hottest shop in San Francisco. There, he met former THD board member Richard Marshall--two Telegraph Hill architects who still work together after more than fifty years.

If June is the model of how most women want to be when they grow up, John is Mr. Fixit, who often helped neighbors out of scrapes. After locking myself out of my apartment, it was "nothing" for John to drag a 30-foot ladder across the street, position it on a hill under my balcony and hold it steady while I climbed home, June all the while begging me not to do it. When I thanked them at lunch at Capp's Corner saying I hoped it wouldn't happen again, John assured me. "I've got the ladder right outside," he said. Another time, when an airport van was stuck on the hill, noise and burning rubber brought John over to survey the problem which he defined as a need for ballast. Soon John, June, John Jr. and his girlfriend, myself and two tourists, whom John had recruited for the occasion, packed the van which the driver had to have towed anyway, and the Coyles

insisted on driving me to SFO.

"The instant I met her I knew June was the gal for me," John said, expressing

the admiration of doubtless a zillion other men but John had the sense to invite her on a romantic first date--a walk across the Golden Gate Bridge. Miss June Celeste is most definitely from the southern parts of these United States. At first meeting, you'd think life had required from this gracious woman nothing more strenuous than stirring honey into tea, but June was a university professor before arriving in San Francisco in the fifties to work as one of the city's few female real estate agents. A tenant in the Telegraph Hill house when it came up for sale she found a way to buy it. John remodeled it, creating a spacious home with a dining room that held a long table around which many have sat wolfing banana walnut pancake brunches and telling the stories of their lives. John's marimba stood ready in a corner, and a guitar--since he knows all the words to the best old songs, we sang them.

The good news. Their house was purchased by former tenants who intend to keep the property intact. The Coyles have found a comfortable retirement apartment in the City. John, of course, refuses to retire and is presently in Napa working with his strapping entrepreneur son.

Each year the many guests who helped trim the Coyles' big Christmas tree included friends with kids, who were kids themselves the first time they came to the wonderful parties on Vallejo Street during the long and happy years when John and June Coyle graced our neighborhood. Bye, pals. We shall miss you.



*Photo of June and John Coyle by Jerry Hurtado*

# **JIM CARROLL: LIVING WITH BOOKS FROM NEBRASKA TO NORTH BEACH**

*By Sheila Black*

Jim Carroll has brought a new, used and rare book treasury to North Beach, to a book store located at Vallejo and Columbus across from Tavolino restaurant.

Brought up in a small town in Nebraska that had no book store, he had read everything in the public library by age 10 and vowed to never again be without literary resources, once he was old enough to travel. It's been a long road, but one with interesting curves and millions of books along the way.

A typical starving student in 1971, Jim found his way to Discovery Books in North Beach, open 'til midnight, welcoming those who wanted to hang out and read. His first job opportunity was at Albatross in the Tenderloin where he began to pay his dues as a professional by unloading and carrying books 4-5 flights up, then referencing and shelving, and eventually visiting Pacific Heights homes with his boss in search of "Californiana" and writings about San Francisco in the early part of the century.

Jim spent 6 years at Green Apple on Clement Street where he became an official book buyer and learned how to be an owner. In 1989 he opened Carroll's Books in Noe Valley where his next door neighbors sequentially were Gypsies reading Tarot cards, then an English tea shop where cucumber sandwiches were served to ladies who wanted to read romance novels and visit with one another. Serving a different population in North Beach, he finds that his trademark bird cage, home to Gouldian and Society finches, is still a hit.

Still a romanticist, Jim and a book-loving acquaintance opened another store in Paris, the "San Francisco Book Co.," which is also thriving. However, that only heightens his delight in the neighborhood, having another almost-native son with a "romantic attachment" back in the fold. Welcome Jim. We've been waiting for you, and are glad to have you back.

## **The Washington Square Inn**

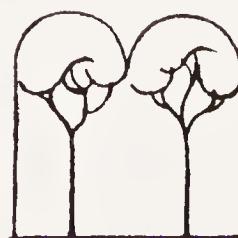
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## LOCAL ITALIANS AID ASSISI ART RESTORATION

By Danny Leone

Adolfo's Ristorante e Bar hosted a 4-course North Beach dinner on October 6 to raise funds for the ongoing art restoration in Assisi, Italy. Annette Di Nunzio, President of the Museo ItaloAmericano helped me work out details of a plan to collect local donations that go directly to Assisi to help our sister city recover from devastating earthquake damage sustained in 1997.

Highlights of the event included a talk about the progress of the restoration project by Father Kevin Schindler-McGraw, a former resident of Assisi,

who's now assigned to the Shrine of St. Francis of Assisi at Columbus and Vallejo. A letter read during the dinner from the superintending architect Costantino Centroni explained that San Francisco's contributions will help finance rebuilding 15th Century stained glass windows from the Basilica for display in the Museum of the Treasure.

Those unable to attend the dinner who wish to contribute to this worthy project may call me at 989-2220.

### \$25 SPRING TREE PLANTING PROGRAM

Friends of the Urban Forest, San Francisco's non-profit citizen tree planting organization, plants street trees in different neighborhoods on Saturday mornings. Since 1981 FUF has worked side by side with neighborhood residents and volunteers to plant over 27,000 trees in San Francisco, increasing property values and the attractiveness and safety of our sidewalks and streets.

A Spring '99 planting program is planned for North Beach, Telegraph Hill and Russian Hill. Residents and business owners are invited to plant trees in front of their buildings at a cost of only \$25. The cost of planting a tree (about \$300 if you did it on your own) is subsidized by Friends of the Urban Forest and special City funding.

To qualify for this special program you must sign up now. Call any of the following people for more information: Joyce at 771-8638. Bernie at 567-4944. Margo at 563-4339.

### INTERVIEWERS NEEDED FOR ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

THD is preparing to launch an oral history project focusing on the history of the Hill as recalled by its residents. The plan is to record interviews with a substantial sample of early residents and current Hill denizens. These voices of the people will be recorded by interviewers, transcribed by Judi Powell, published and made available at the local library or other convenient venues.

Right now, we need to hear from anyone interested in volunteering to conduct interviews and attend a training workshop. If you are interested in participating in the project and/or would like to suggest possible interviewees, please contact Dennis McElrath at 397-0201.

## NEWS FROM THE NORTH BEACH LIBRARY

2000 Mason Street at Columbus Avenue. Telephone 415-274-0270

### *"Library Greetings"*

By Gardner Haskell

Visit the library to gather free winter information. Not only do we have the book, "Reclaiming San Francisco: History, Politics, Culture," published by City Lights, but on December 15 at 7:00 PM we will host a slide show given by one of the editors, Chris Carlsson, who produced an interactive CD-ROM titled, "Shaping San Francisco"--described as an interactive multimedia excavation of the lost history of San Francisco.

Pick up a copy of City Guides brochure which lists free walking tours and opportunities to learn more about Telegraph Hill, Literary North Beach, The Embarcadero and Chinatown. Tour information and updates is available by calling 415-557-4266. Digerati can go to <http://www.hooked.net/users/jhum>.

And for those of us whose animal amigos are the wild parrots of Telegraph Hill, take your own self-guided tour to see our multi-colored feathered friends on the Greenwich Street steps some afternoon (they usually appear for 30-40 minutes around 2:00-2:30 PM at this time of year.) If you want to bring them a holiday treat, try raw unshelled sunflower seeds.

### *Special Programs at the Children's Library*

By Jensa Woo, Children's Librarian

Come and find out just how true the public library's motto is--"access, discover, empower." In addition to having a core collection of books and other resources, the library features special programs for children. Upcoming programs include:

- What to do with scrap metals? Find out as we make art from usable scraps on Thursday, December 3 at 3:45 PM. For ages 6 and up.

- Just for young people in middle school: Make friendship bracelets to share with a friend or two on Wednesday, December 9 at 4:00 PM.
- Join us for our annual holiday tree trim and craft program on Wednesday, December 19 at 3:30 PM. Kids can make their own decorations to bring home, too.
- On Saturday, January 30, at 12:30 PM, a lion dance and martial arts troupe will be at the library to help welcome in Chinese New Year, the Year of the Hare!

Call the library for more information about special events and scheduled storytime programs for infants, toddlers and preschoolers.

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WE TAKE IT TO THE WORLD

Danielle Chavanon  
415 296 2224

Michael Bruno  
415 296 2210

# THE GENTLE ART OF RELAXATION

When your world is spinning too fast and you need some healthful, mindful time for yourself, a day spa is the answer. Sanctuary Spa, located within easy walking distance for those who live in the North Beach area, is such a place. Call it hedonistic pleasure, a pit stop or rejuvenation time, a visit to Sanctuary Spa is just the answer to the emotional or physical doldrums.

Located at North Point and Columbus in the new retail corner of the Marriott at Fisherman's Wharf, Sanctuary Spa caters to local residents, as well as visitors (both men and women).

Amidst its sensory-altering ambiance, Sanctuary's four private treatment rooms, multi-jet showers and make-up area completely pamper guests. During multiple treatments, guests enjoy the triangular-shaped relaxation room, complete with reading material and complimentary beverages.

Following the fast growing trend of stress management, Sanctuary Spa leads San Francisco's industry by offering over 60 unique services including a full assortment of massage, hydrotherapy, facials, nail care and herbal wraps. Massage styles run the gamut from Shiatsu to Swedish, while marine-based facials designed for men and women, offer natural enzyme and glycolic treatments.

Using Hydrotone, one of the world's foremost hydrotherapy tubs imported from Australia, Sanctuary Spa guests have access to customized underwater treatments ranging from sports massages to liquid mud baths. Hydrotone is the only FDA approved tub in the country, a rating based not only on its stress relieving 120 water jets but also on its efficient self-cleaning mechanism.

More and more health care professionals are acknowledging the value of hydrotherapy and massage in the treatment of sports injuries, migraine, tension, and arthritis. So much so, in fact, that some insurance companies are allowing massage as a

reimbursable benefit.

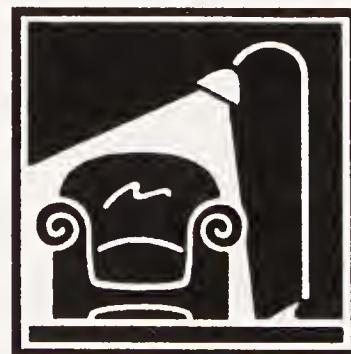
For the weight conscious, there's a Frigi Thalgo Anti Cellulite treatment, which uses an aromatherapy/herbal product developed in Provence. In fact, a full line of skin care products developed by Thalgo is available in the retail section, along with a variety of health and personal care products that make excellent gifts. Gift certificates are also available.

Sanctuary's complete wellness focus includes Saturday Ashtanga Yoga classes and mid-week evening educational salons on everything from meditation to nutrition and vitamin therapy.

Sanctuary Spa is a California corporation financed by a group of local, professional women, one of whom is North Beach resident and community activist Marsha Garland. Open daily. For reservations, call 415/447-0080.

Open Daily 10AM - 10PM

C A R R O L L ' S



B O O K S

633 Vallejo Street  
San Francisco, CA 94133

415 397-6364

Open Daily 10AM - 10PM

# CHARLES CAMPBELL: AN ARTFUL NORTH BEACH TREASURE

By Sheila Black

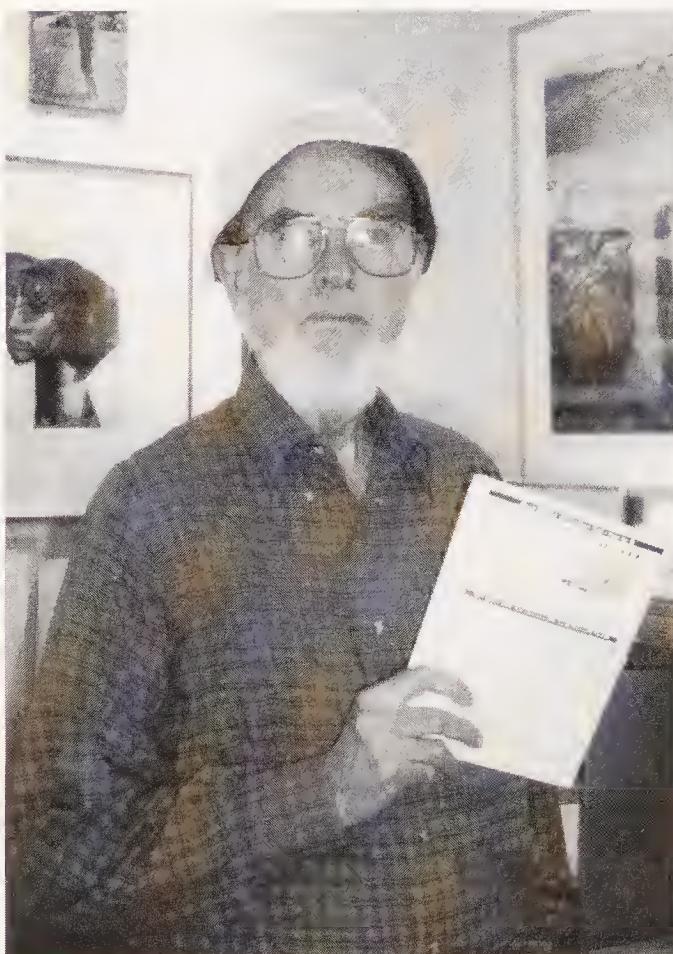
Charles Campbell has a history almost as eclectic and interesting as North Beach itself. His grandfather arrived by wagon train in Nevada City in 1850; his father was born in Siskiyou County in 1881. The whole family survived San Francisco's 1906 earthquake. Later, Mr. Campbell's parents mined for gold in Alaska, then Siberia where their property was confiscated during the Russian Revolution. Hoping fruitlessly for political change, they settled in Shanghai for 12 years, where young Charles was born and spent his school years, while his mother ran a restaurant for foreigners called The Chocolate Shop.

In 1947 he rented a building from banker John DeMartini and opened an art materials and picture framing business, The Louvre, at Chestnut and Columbus. Twenty years later when the DeMartini heirs sold the building he opened another store and bought the building where he still holds forth down the block on Chestnut. It became an art gallery in 1972, and in 1991 Mr. Campbell took in his friend Paul

(son of the well-known painter Wayne Thiebaud) as a partner. Somewhere in the early interim Charles, a self-described "jazz nut", and his old buddy Turk Murphy, opened The Italian Village--a jazz club at Columbus and Lombard that now houses the 7th Note Showclub. Talk about covering the bases!

Mr. Campbell and his talented painter wife Glenna, whom he had known professionally since 1947, both lost spouses to terminal illness. In 1988 they were married by a Hindu priest in Katmandu (so neither of their families would be inconvenienced by travel), and married again in Nevada City for the sake of legality.

He firmly believes that North Beach is the most interesting business/residential area in the city and that the ethnic changes--particularly the addition of Asians to the traditional Italian composite--simply serve it make it



*Charles Campbell in his gallery holds a copy of The Semaphore.*

*Photo by Sheila Black.*

even more interesting. He plans to stay where he is until he gets bored, and from all appearances, that won't be any time soon.

## President's Letter *cont. from pg 16*

follow the progress of the proposed (decreed by His Honor?) hotel project at Broadway and The Embarcadero which is proceeding without proper public input. Another rubber-stamp episode, THD will be an active watchdog and participate to the maximum as the process continues.

To those who attended our General Membership dinner meeting in July I'm pleased to say that, as promised that evening, Telegraph Hill Dwellers now

has a new sound system. To those who missed our November General Membership meeting at Buca Giovanni, you should know that the food was outstanding, and that Captain John Goldberg from Central Station received rave reviews from everyone. We are in awe that Central Station staff accomplishes so much with so few. Finally, I extend best wishes for happy holidays on behalf of myself, THD's Board of Directors and Committee Chairs.

## Planning and Zoning *cont. from pg 11*

blocking of views from Pioneer Park.

**5. I-Hotel/Colombo Building Project.** Friends of the Colombo Building filed suit against the City College Board of Trustees to challenge their certification of the final EIR and approval to acquire the Colombo and Fong Buildings, which will result in the demolition of these two historic buildings, the displacement of 21 low-income families and the construction on these two sites of a massive 8-story, 120-foot high campus facility. Meanwhile, public opposition to the project is continuing to grow.

**6. Chestnut Street access (CNET Corporation).** CNET has opened the formerly closed area (at Chestnut and Kearny) for pedestrian access during day light hours. Thanks to P & Z Committee member Susan Weisberg who followed up with CNET to make this happen.

**7. 262 Chestnut Street.** A proposal has been made to construct two single family homes on a vacant lot. Project sponsors, John Clawson and Terry Behm, made a presentation to the P & Z Committee. There was considerable concern raised by neighbors on this block of Chestnut regarding the impacts that the project would have on views.

A number of alternatives which might lessen the impact were discussed. The Committee encouraged the neighbors and project sponsors to try to work together to reach an acceptable solution.

**CITY LIGHTS**  
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## Snapshots

*cont. from pg 24*

Naomi is a writer. They are working on articles for Scholastic Publishing, New York, which has 25 magazines specializing in teenagers and little children. Naomi, warming to the task of being interviewed said, "Another of our projects, which we've named 'Enormous Changes at the Last Minute,' focuses on older immigrants arriving here from all over the world—in particular Eastern Europe. We're doing portraits and profiles on these first generation pioneers following them through their trials, tribulations and ultimate successes."

Speaking of Eastern Europe, Colin Campbell was there November 9, 1989 with camera in hand to capture students and workers tearing down a section of the Berlin Wall. "The East German military put that section of wall back up within hours, but it didn't stand. Workers and students gathered and tore it down again. The East Germans, to their credit, didn't fire on the crowd. I think the East Germans guards just wanted it over. They were tired of the killing. The contrast between the two Germanys could've been starker. They had to see that, and they wanted it to end—it did end." Colin has an archive of photos that capture the moment and he has traveled far and wide to do it.

Naomi Marcus is well traveled too. After earning her masters from Columbia Journalism School in 1983, Naomi traveled throughout the former Soviet Union as a freelance journalist. Her facility with languages made that possible—she's fluent in Russian. Today, in addition to her freelance writing, she works as a counselor for the Jewish Vocational Service in San Francisco. "I work with refugees of all types, recently we've had an influx of people from Bosnia. We have a very high placement rate. The program offers English and job skills. As soon as possible we mainstream individuals into work and/or further education. We help talented people in the transition from life in the Old World to life in the US."



*Naomi Marcus and Colin Campbell are partners in work.*

Naomi was raised in Carmel Highlands and graduated from UC Santa Cruz before attending Columbia. Colin grew up in Detroit. The family was entrepreneurial, having a specialty business working with custom, restored and antique lampshades. He earned his BA at the University of Michigan in 1972, majoring in literature and minoring in photography. He took to documentary photography right away. "My right-brain took over, and I have been taking pictures ever since. Naomi mentioned how we are doing profiles and portraits on immigrants over 50, but another story we are also working on is about women in the trades. A couple of years ago I got the job to photo document the damage done to City Hall by the Loma Prieta earthquake. I was still snapping photos when construction crews started showing up. I noticed that a lot of them were women. Often my best work has a serendipity quality to it. I go in on assignment to do one thing and something else grows out of it. I think you are successful in this business if you recognize a story when you see it. When the opportunity presents itself, you jump on it!" Naomi Marcus and Colin Campbell are good at capturing the moment.

Deltours Inc. will be arranging Connoisseur Journeys to Europe, South America, and all over the world for Telegraph Hill Dwellers.

Please choose your favorite destination as a choice for a tour for you and your travel companions.

- .....
1. The Wines of France: Loire Valley and Bordeaux
  2. Jewish and Moorish Spain
  3. Ten Days in the Tuscan Landscape
  4. Chile
  5. New Zealand
  6. Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Please call us with your reply at 1-(800)-962-2219

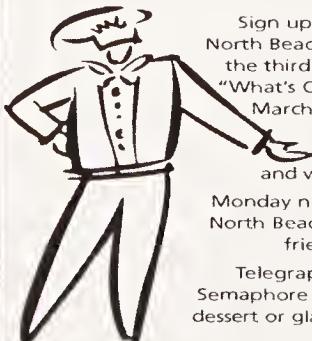
## HELP TEACH KIDS TO READ!

Rolling Readers is a non-profit organization dedicated to helping Title I school children learn to read. They desperately need volunteers to tutor children from kindergarten through 5th grade at Garfield School on Telegraph Hill, and at Commodore Stockton School in Chinatown.

If you can offer your services weekdays from 1:00 to 3:00 PM at either of these locations, please contact Faith Passy at 300 Seneca Avenue, SF 94112. Telephone 469-4784.

## HERE'S ANOTHER OF LIFE'S LITTLE REWARDS.

Now there's a little cook in everyone.



Sign up for the hottest new event in North Beach. Join Chef Jeffery Hicks on the third Saturday of every month for "What's Cooking" classes. Next class is March 21, 1-3 PM. "Stuffed Pastas-Whimsical to Traditional". Cooking classes, lunch and wine \$25. Call now 434-2900.

Monday nights are "Jazz at Little City", North Beach favorite John Coppola and friends jam from 8:30-11:30 PM.

Telegraph Hill Residents-mention the Semaphore and receive a complimentary dessert or glass of wine at lunch or dinner.



## THD Committees Need You...

You can make a difference! Join one of THD's committees, meet and work with your fellow Hill Dwellers to improve life on the Hill.

### SPECIAL COMMITTEES

#### **Neighborhood Beautification**

Co-chairs Suzanne Nelson, 986-6210; Staci Shember, 434-4625. Creates opportunities to improve, beautify, and preserve the Hill. Through its awards program, recognizes individuals and businesses who enhance our neighborhood. Facilitates cleanup, gardening and graffiti removal.

**N.E.R.T.** June Fraps, 392-1187. Energizes members to take emergency disaster response training program sponsored by the City.

**Parking and Traffic.** Howard Wong, 982-5055. Represents THD before City agencies on traffic control, curb markings and Muni service, cooperating with other neighborhood groups.

**Pioneer Park Improvement Project.** Howard Wong, 982-5055. Ongoing project enhances the open space around Coit Tower, improving accessibility and safety through planning, landscaping work parties and fundraising.

**Planning and Zoning.** Co-chairs Aaron Peskin, 986-7014; Nancy Shanahan, 986-7094. Monitors and reviews proposed development projects for consistency with applicable City ordinances. Works with Planning Department staff and represents THD before the Landmarks Board, Planning Commission, Zoning Administrator and other regulating bodies to protect historic resources and maintain neighborhood character. Assists members to learn more about and participate in planning and zoning issues.

### STANDING COMMITTEES

**Budget.** Paul Switzer, 788-8667. As prescribed in bylaws for Treasurer.

**Membership.** James Attwood, 433-6118. As prescribed in bylaws for Financial Secretary.

**Program.** Co-chairs Diana Blank, 986-2633; Mary Purdy-Read, 433-9626. Arranges social events, including quarterly membership meetings and get-acquainted social functions.

**Semaphore.** Patricia Cady, 397-2175. The editor and staff produce a quarterly magazine for THD members.

### **This may be your last Semaphore**

If the mailing label on this Semaphore is dated 9/1/98 or earlier, your membership has lapsed and we hope you'll rectify that situation with a check.

If you think our records are incorrect or you are in doubt about your membership status, please call James Attwood, 433-6118, or drop a note to THD, Membership, PO Box 330159, San Francisco CA 94133. We want to keep you with us!



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## THD CALENDAR

THE TELEGRAPH HILL DWELLERS  
P.O. BOX 330159  
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94133

- 1st Saturday Stair & Garden Work Parties. January 2. February 6. March 6. Meet at Pioneer Park. For more information call 391-9919.
- Monday, December 21, Meet at 5:15 PM at Washington Square. New lighting is switched on at 5:30, followed by THD's Caroling Party. All are welcome. Come and sing.
- Wednesday, January 13. 6:00-8:30 PM. Benefit for the Battered Bear. Wine and hors d'oeuvres at Little City Restaurant, Union and Powell. \$20.00. Hosted by Ralph and Val Tashjian.
- Watch for postcard invitations to winter-months cocktail parties and the next General Membership dinner meeting.

### Monthly Committee Meetings

*Planning & Zoning:* Last Wednesdays. Call for time and location 986-7070.

*Parking & Traffic:* Second Saturdays at 11 AM at Little City Restaurant, Union and Powell Streets.

*Neighborhood Beautification:* First Mondays. Call for time and location. 986-6210 or 434-4625.

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